

May 80
(NEXT Magazine)

Dear Reader:

We sometimes have lunch with a very successful executive who subscribes wholeheartedly to "the little crackpot in the basement" theory of the future.

In a nutshell, his theory works like this: Forget the "great men" of our time -- the statesmen, presidents, generals and kings. These "leaders" make headlines -- not history. Instead, he warns, watch out for "the little crackpot in the basement" -- the unknown, unheralded, hitherto "loser" who will suddenly pull a rabbit out of the hat and change the world.

As proof, our friend points to a mediocre civil servant named Einstein who altered our concept of the universe. A down-at-the-heels handyman named Edison who changed the way we live our daily lives. A pair of dropout brothers from Ohio who gave up repairing bicycles and gave mankind the wings to fly.

Often, when peering into the ripples of his third pre-lunch martini, our companion will ruminate on his own personal "little crackpot." Somewhere, he firmly believes, in some godforsaken, flyspecked basement workshop, a long-haired, wild-eyed genius is putting the finishing touches on a machine, a micro-chip or whatever, that will perform our friend's job better and cheaper than he does. "It's only a matter of time," he mutters while signalling the bartender for a refill. "Those damn little crackpots work morning, noon and night."

We think our colleague's view a bit glum -- but his point is well taken. And at NEXT, A Look Into The Future, we'll never make the mistake of overlooking the little guy, whether he's a crackpot or not.

We'll keep tabs on the fellow out West who thinks he's only a hop, skip and a jump away from perfecting an electric car that runs for 500 miles between battery charges. We'll be watching the insurance salesman down South who's designing

(in his basement, of course) a backyard windmill that produces enough power to pump your water and light up your house. And we'll be checking in with the Midwestern farmer who claims he gets 30 miles to the gallon on fuel distilled from horse manure!

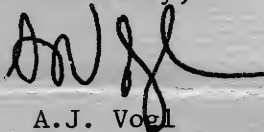
True, most of tomorrow's big breakthroughs will no doubt come from our heavily funded research institutes and brain-laden universities. And you'll hear about all of them in NEXT.

But we can't help thinking that -- out there -- are thousands of crackpots in thousands of basements working their hearts out on projects you and I (and maybe even those big research institutes) haven't even dreamed of! And one of these days, well, who knows?

I guess my main point is this: Whatever the future brings, make sure it includes NEXT! Remember, a sample issue is yours to read and keep without cost or obligation just so we can introduce you to this truly unique reading experience.

But, please, reserve your free copy by May 31, 1980. After that date, this special invitational offer will close!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'A.J. Voel', with a stylized flourish at the end.

A.J. Voel
Editor-in-Chief

And finally, a word about

“the little crackpot in the basement”